WHEAT AND CHAFF

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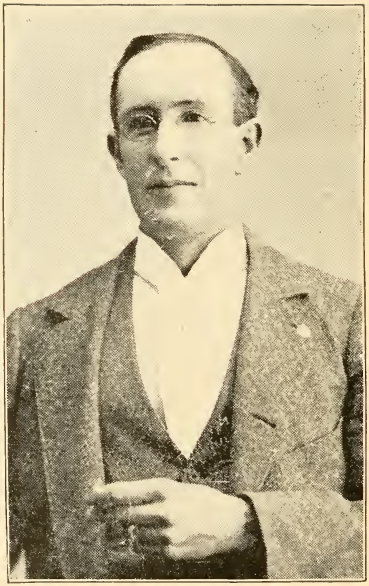

MARSHAL S. CORNWELL.

WHEAT . . .
AND CHAFF

VERSES, LETTERS, AND EXTRACTS
FROM THE WRITINGS
. . OF . .
M. S. CORNWELL.

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Jun. 3. 99.

To
The Memory of
THE AUTHOR.

Mch. 12
1897

M. S. Cornwell, Esq. —

Dear Sir:

By the poems you send me, especially the one "Success", your gift seems genuine and far above that indicated in verse meeting general approval. Your own philosophy in last stanzas of "Success" contains the entire Creed of fame or failure for the striver, in any line of Art in this World's order and conditions. You can succeed, but must be of stoutest heart and hope and patience — just as Every master before our time. Therefore let us read their lives as well as works and in between the lines down fathoms deep. Remain firmly superior to all trials — Keep sound of soul and always hale of faith in all good things. Work and Endure ghly rejoice in your work and utter it ever like a jubilant prayer. Fraternally yours

— James Whitcomb Riley

PREFACE.

In this age, when so many new books are annually given to the public, and so many literary men have won deserved distinction, it would seem almost useless to invite the attention of the reader, unless your works are of extraordinary merit. No such claim is intended for this publication. On the contrary, we know that many of the poems herein contained were hurriedly thrown off in an idle hour, and published by the author in his own or his brother's paper, and that he intended revising them, but was prevented from doing so by rapidly failing health, which finally culminated in his death—May 26th, 1898—in the 27th year of his age.

The many requests for copies of certain poems and letters of the deceased, and the many suggestions that have come to us urging a compilation of the same, furnishes the only apology that is given for this undertaking, though it be a labor of love on the part of the publishers.

To those sufficiently interested to peruse this volume,

a word as to the history of the author will not be out of place.

Marshall S. Cornwell was born October 18th, 1871, in Hampshire County, West Virginia. He was raised on a farm, where he labored hard until grown. He never attended college a day in his life, though few men of his age were better informed. He was a great reader and had a remarkable memory. His education came from this, and his close observance of human nature.

After leaving the farm he engaged in publishing a county newspaper at Petersburg, and later at Elkins, West Virginia. The city had no attraction for him. His thoughts were wrapped up in the country, and in the closing hours of his life his memory reverted to the old home and farm.

Many of the poems and letters which are here published, were written when he was wandering, face to face with death, on the eastern coast of Florida or on the banks of the Rio Grand. Hence the serious and pathetic strain which pervades most of them, though occasionally come flashes of wit and humor, characteristic of his cheerful life.

Finally the message came from far off El Paso, that he "had given up the battle and was coming home to die". His sick room was never a chapel of gloom, and he was never so happy as when friends surrounded him and little children played by his side.

His last hour was a perfect song of rejoicing. One by one he called the members of his family to his side, and spoke to them words of counsel and wisdom. Finally he pressed down his eyelids with his own fingers,

folded his arms upon his breast, and the sweet smile that settled over his face told us he had found that perfect peace which he had seen in his "Dream of Rest."

His remains were laid to rest in the "Indian Mound Cemetery", at Romney, just as the sun set behind the western hills, amid one of the largest assemblages of people we ever saw there upon a similar occasion.

As the deceased believed he had a mission in the world, and had completed it, this little book, the product of his pen, is given the public, hoping that some one who reads it will be bettered thereby.

W. B. CORNWELL,
JNO. J. CORNWELL.

"A little book of happy dreams,
The product of an idle day—
Stray flashes of the light that streams
Across my lone and barren way.

"I would not change mine humble lot
To reign a king through countless years,
For I, though unknown and forgot,
Have heard the music of the spheres."

The verses above were found upon the fly leaf of the little scrap-book carried by the Author in his lone ramblings through the pine woods of Florida, and along the banks of the Rio Grande, in his search for the health he found no more.

A DREAM OF REST.

I SAT in the dusk of the dying day,
By the foot of the green-clad height,
And watched the glow of the sun's last ray,
Engulfed by the shades of night ;—

Saw the steal o'er the valley wide,
And the river's darkening stream ;
While the mountain's crown, and its wooded side,
Grew faint in the fading gleam.

And over my soul, as the shadows fell,
Softly stole a dream of rest,
And it seemed, in my dream, that all was well,
And that sorr. w and toil were blest.

And I prayed, oh father, when cometh the night,
At the end of my weary day,
May I wait, as calm as the wood-crowned height,
In the glow of the sun's last ray.

May the peace that falls on nature's breast,
When the day dies out of the sky,
Fill my soul at last, with joy and rest,
When my last hour draweth nigh.

SOME DAY.

The following poem was read at the grave of the deceased by Rev. Washburn.

SOME day, through the mists of the earthly night,
We shall catch the gleam of the harbor light,
That shines forever on the far off shore,
Where dwell the loved who have gone before;
We shall anchor safe from our stormy way,
In that haven of rest, some day, some day.

Some day our sorrows will all be o'er,
And we'll rest from trouble forevermore;
When over the river's rolling tide,
We shall "strike glad hands" on the other side;
It the city celestial, at last, we may
Rest in peace, some day, some day.

Some day will close these weary eyes,
That shall look no more on the earthly skies,
And over the heart, that has ceased to beat,
Kind hands will place fresh flowers sweet;
But my soul shall hear the celestial lay,
Sweet pæns of praise, some day.

THE RIVER OF DREAMS.

FROM its source in the Valley of Infancy,
Until lost in the mists of eternity,
Flows the mystical River of Dreams;
And who hath been borne on the river's tide,
Where the shadowy barques of the dreamers ride,
Hath reveled in fairy scenes.

There are magical isles through which we glide,
As over the silvery waves we ride
Where our tears are remembered no more;
Only happiness dwells where we float along,
And the sound of the waves is a slumber-song,
As they break on the dream-river's shore.

There's a harbor safe, where the dream-barques stay
Awhile, as they glide on their noiseless way;—
'Tis the haven of long ago;
And there by the beauteous river's shore,
The friends we have loved who have gone before
Are waiting for us I know.

Where the sunny hair, and the smiling face,
And all the heaven of childish grace
Which was ours in bygone years;
Comes back to us there
In that harbor, fair,
To banish our doubts, and fears.

So ever the white barques glide along
To the rhythmical beat of the slumber song
On the tide of the River of Dreams;—
From its scource in the vale of infancy
'Til lost in the mists of eternity
A river of rest it seems.

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THE OLD SPANISH MISSION.

[The old Spanish Mission at New Smyrna, Florida, is one of the oldest landmarks on this continent. The sight is one of the most beautiful that could be imagined in the heart of the forest, a few miles from the ocean.]

I GAZED on a ruin old and gray
In the shadowy depths of the forest way
Afar from the haunts of busy life,
And the rush of the mad world's ceaseless strife.

Only the song birds nesting there,
Broke the dreamy calm of the quiet air,
Or the mighty ocean's ceaseless roar,
As it breaks in foam on the tropic shore.

But where are they, those men who came
From the vine-clad hills of sunny Spain?
They rest for aye in the quiet grave,
Where the green palmettos gently wave.

As I gazed I seemed to see in a dream,
Once more the alter tapers gleam,
And 'neath the shade of the forest green
I seemed to hear the vesper hymn.

And the vesper chime of the mission bells,
Once more on the breeze mellifluous swells,
The black robed priests from the hills of Spain
Have come from the past to their own again.

Alas! 'twas only a fleeting dream.
And the fading glow of the taper's gleam
Was only a glow worm's flickering light,
Revealed by the coming of tropic night.

The vesper song that rose and fell
On the balmy air, and the vesper bell,
Was only the wind from the tropic seas
Singing softly through the tall green trees.

Yet what is life but a fleeting dream?
No matter how fair the morn may seem,
Soon joy is only a memory dim
Like the sound of that ghostly vesper hymn.

* * *

SUCCESS.

The "Athenæum," a college paper published at the University of West Virginia, offered a sum of money as a prize for the best original poem. The following received the award, having been selected from a great number, and is the poem referred to by Jas. Whitcomb Riley.

TWO ships sail over the harbor bar,
With the flush of the morning breeze,
And both are bound for a haven, far
O'er the shimmering summer seas.

With sails all set, fair wind and tide,
They steer for the open main ;
But little they reck of the billows wide,
E'er they anchor safe again.

There is one, perchance, e'er the summer is done,
That reaches the port afar,
She hears the sound of the welcoming gun
As she crosses the harbor bar.

The haven she reaches, Success, 'tis said
Is the end of a perilous trip,
Perchance e'en the bravest and best are dead,
Who sailed in the fortunate ship.

The other bereft of shroud and sail,
At the mercy of wind and tide,
Is swept by the might of the pitiless gale,
'Neath the billows dark and wide.

But 'tis only the one in the harbor there
That receiveth the meed of praise ;
The other sailed when the morn was fair,
And was lost in the stormy ways.

And so to men who have won renown
In the weary battle of life,
There cometh at last the victor's crown,
Not to him who fell in the strife.

For the world recks not of those who fail,
Nor cares what their trials are,
Only praises the ship that with swelling sail,
Comes in o'er the harbor bar.

AN INVOCATION.

GIVE me, oh Lord of life, I pray
A little love lest I should stray.
'Tis this I ask, and this alway,
Unto the end of life's brief day.

I crave no storm of passion's flood,
That madly stirs the human blood,
Only the love of friend for friend—
And be it faithful to the end.

For human hearts have human needs;
And naught of piety or creeds,
Of peace can give to souls forlorn
That stem alone life's battle-storm.

I ask not wisdom—the divine;
For death shall make this soul of mine
To heights and depths of knowledge vast,
When outworn dreams of earth are past.

A little love alone I crave,
To light my pathway to the grave—
The hand of friendship, tried and strong,
To steer my shattered barque along.

Until at last the sail is furled,
In the wide bay where, tempest hurled,
Storm-riven wrecks from time's rough sea
Ride safe through all eternity!

SABBATH BELLS.

HOW sweet is the melody soft and entrancing,
That breaks on our senses each bright sabbath morn,
As o'er the green valleys the sunbeams are glancing,
To gladden the heart and the world to adorn.

Like the joyous hosannas, the shepherds heard sounding,
When seraphs and cherubims joined in the song ;
Of mercy, and peace, and of good will abounding,
The chorus resounding o'er earth loud and long,

Are the gentle, loved tones of the Sabbath bells calling,
The weary from toils of the days that are past,
As over the hearts of mankind they are falling,
A message of love and of life that shall last.

And when their soft music our burdens shall lighten,
In city or country where e'er we may roam,
Sweet dreams of the past the present shall lighten,
And memories cling round the spot we call home.

The murmuring stream and the trees that wave o'er it,
The village that sleeps at the foot of the hill,
The meadows spread out like a green rug before it,
The willows that waved o'er the moss covered mill.

We have heard the bells ring when the spring-time was fairest;
When budding leaves first met the kiss of the sun,
And again when the glories of Autumn were rarest,
And falling leaves warned us that summer was done.

We have heard richest chimes calling myriads of people,
To worship in temples both stately and grand,
But one note from the bell in that humble church steeple,
Were sweeter by far to the world wearied man.

THE PASSING OF THORWALD.

IN Norway where the midnight sun
Gleams on Ras Vatna hoary,
Heroic deeds by sea kings done,
Are told in song and story.

Stern as the Winter's icy bands,
Yet brave and gentle hearted,
The Vikings bold who ruled the lands
In days that have departed.

Vallhallah's halls ne'er opened wide
To him who shrank from duty;
But to the warrior true and tried
They shone in all their beauty.

Jarl Thorwald sat within his hall,
His liegemen all assembled,
And when he spake each bounden thrall
Obeisance made, and trembled.

Spake he, "the good ship Valdemir
Rides on the open Fiord,
And I a dotard linger here,
No more your warrior lord."

Spake he, "I have braved the fiercest gale
That e'er the North sea knew,
But the Valdemir ne'er slackened sail
For storm that ever blew."

"But age has chilled the warm life blood
That courses through each vein,
The music of the restless flood,
I ne'er shall hear again."

"Already Woden's beckoning hand
O'er the waves is calling me.
He is calling me to the mystic strand,
To Vallhallah o'er the sea."

"Now bear me down to the Valdemir,
For my spirit is ebbing fast.
And give me the Viking's fiery bier,
For my earthly life is past"

Alone on the deck of the ocean steed
They laid the sea king bold,
And the flames by the liegemen freed
Crept up through the silent hold.

Each mast and spar like a gleaming brand
Shone out 'gainst the winter sky,
And the Valdemir bore out from land
And the red flames leaped on high.

And as the wreck of the burning barque
Drifted out on the restless sea,
The soul of Thorwald sped in the dark
To Vallhallah o'er the sea.

ONLY A TRAMP.

(An unknown man, who was injured on the W. Va. C. & P. Ry., said, as his life passed away: "I am only a tramp, no friends, no home. Don't write or telegraph to anybody, but bury me in the potter's field.")

ONLY a tramp, no friends, no home.
Drifting out in the dark alone.
Only a wreck on the unknown tide,
Borne away to the unknown side.

Who shall say of the dead man there,
What was the weary load of care
That shut him out from the joys of life,
From a happy home and a loving wife.

A lonely grave on the mountain side,
In the heart of the wilderness, waste and wide,
Is all that's claimed by the lifeless clod,
Fashioned fair in the image of God.

Perchance if these dumb lips could tell,
The story of sorrow known full well,
By the sorrowing poor on life's highway,
We'd pity this wanderer, dead to-day.

A story, perchance, of a manly man,
In whose veins the blood of a freeman ran,
Of half-paid labor, of want and strife,
And this, the end of a ruined life.

Condemn him not, lest you, some day,
Should reach the end in the self-same way—
Lest you should live to be old and poor,
And ask for a crust at the stranger's door.

FROM THE VALLEY.

THE day still gleams on the brow of the height,
When 'tis dark in the valley below;
And the first pale beams of the dawning light
Kiss the billows of frozen snow.

The climber ever turneth his face,
Toward the glittering goal above,
And left behind in the upward race,
Lie youth, and joy, and love.

It is cold on the brow of the height;
It is warm in the valley below,
But ambition lures, like a mirage bright
With a steady pitiless glow.

The climber, at eve, lies cold and stark,
On the breast of the frozen snow;
But joy still dwells in the love-warm dark,
Of the vale of content, below.

THE SEA SHORE.

SING a song of Jersey shores,
White sand dunes and breakers,
Hot board-walks and white hotels,
Crowds of merry makers.

Prices higher than the moon,
Steak as tough as leather,
Summer girls in summer garb,
Sweltering August weather.

Love talks in the gloaming,
By the lapping tide,
Big old bull mosquito
Boring through your hide.

Battling with the ocean,
Dipping in the foam,
Wondering what your creditors
Will say when you get home.

Sing a song of Summer
By the sounding sea;
Go there if you want to,
But—please excuse me.

A CHRISTMAS TOAST.

HERE'S to the good old Christmas times,
We knew so long ago,
When merry sleigh-bells jingled,
O'er the hills of frozen snow.

To our childish joys and sorrows,
That are buried in the past,
And to the hopes of later years—
Bright dreams that would not last.

To our early loves and losses,
Our struggles, hopes, and fears,
And to the path our feet shall tread,
Through all the coming years.

To the sacred memory of old friends,
Whose warm hand clasp we knew,
In the morning of our life time,
When we deemed all friendship true.

But better still, to those we've loved,
Through all the changing years,—
Who have shared our joys and sorrows,
Our laughter and our tears.

A pleasant voyage may theirs be,
Adown time's troubled stream,
'Till through the darkening evening mists,
The harbor lights shall gleam.

WHERE THE RAIN DROPS FELL.

OVER all the pastures, burnt and brown,
O'er the dusty streets of the busy town,
Swiftly, but gently and silently came,
The pattering drops of the welcome rain,
And their joy at the shower, the songsters tell
To the listening world, where the rain drops fell.

'Mid the leafy isles of the forests dark,
In the flower-lined ways of the city park,
The trees were greener, the flowers more fair,
When the shower came and freshened the air,
And nature rejoiced that all was well,
And the earth smiled anew where the rain drops fell.

So our hearts may be seared, and burnt, and brown,
Like the plants that grow in the heat of the town,
But our lives shall be brightened, our sorrows made light,
As the roseate morning shall follow the night,
When we hear the sweet voice of God's mercies that call,
As over our pathway his blessings shall fall.

IN MEMORY OF DR. SAMUEL F. SMITH.

Author of our National Hymn.

AND thou art gone, whose sweetest song
Was sung at freedom's holy shrine.
Thou heardst the angel's loving call,
Across the distant hills of time.

Thy weary form is lowly laid,
To moulder in the silent tomb,
And o'er thy resting place is spread,
Death's sullen, sombre, starless gloom.

Yet all the sons of free-born sires,
Who love the land where freedom reigns,
From wild New England's rock-bound coast,
To California's sunny plains,

Will write thy epitaph upon
The hearts of children yet to be,
And teach their prattling tongues to lisp,
"My country, 'tis of thee".

A SUMMER SYMPHONY.

MY bonnie brown lass, with laughing eye,
And footsteps like the fawn,
Your fleeting smile, as ye pass by,
Is sweet as summer's dawn.

The wild bee clings,
With folded wings,
To the bloom of the swaying clover,
And carmine tips
Of coral lips,
Sair tempt a June-time lover.

My bonnie brown lass, of graceful mien,
Like naiad or wood nymph seeming,
If ye will or nay, I name ye queen,
Of all my day-time dreaming.

The skylark's trill,
By woodland rill,
Or call of the mating plover,
Is not more sweet,
To ears they greet,
Than your laughter bubbling over.

My bonnie wild lass, with cheeks as brown,
As the maples of September,
Tho' I dread the cloud of your haughty frown,
I bid you aye remember,—

The wild bee clings,
With folded wings,
To the bloom of the swaying clover,
And carmine tips,
Of coral lips,
Sair tempt a June-time lover.

❋ ❋ ❋

A FRAGMENT.

THERE'S a pall of gloom o'er the winter sky,
The lamps have gone out in the darkness on high,
The old year is dying,
The wild winds are sighing,
And the past with its pleasures, its smiles, and its tears,
Gives way to the future, its hopes and its fears.

A friend to some, has the old year been,
And a pitiless foe to others, I ween,
But some will reap,
While others must weep,
For the tide of time, with its ceaseless flow
Waits not for mortals here below.

Here's a sigh for the old year, soon to be o'er,
And a smile for the new one that is now before;
For 'tis ever with hope,
That we blindly grope,
In the darkest depths of the gloomy night,
That forever obscures the future's light.

IN MEMORY OF EUGENE FIELD.

ALL rusted the harp that the minstrel played,
E'er he wandered from earth afar,
Down the shining path, by the angel's made,
To the beautiful gates ajar.

Yet the touching stories of childish lore,
And the minstrel's tender song,
Will echo back from that far off shore,
With a cadence full and strong.

And thousands of children who loved his name,
For the sake of the Little Boy Blue,
Will raise a shaft to the poet's fame,
From the depth of their love so true.

'Twere better far than a nation's praise,
This tribute of childish love,
To the poet gone from our earthly gaze,
To the land of light above.

* * *

THE BLUE AND THE GRAY.

At a joint celebration of Washington's Birthday, at Elkins, by the G. A. R. Post and a Camp of Confederate Veterans Mr. M. S. Cornwell, of the "Inter Mountain", read the following beautiful original poem: —Wheeling Register.

THE death dealing passions that burned fierce and bright,
In the heart of the nation, when grim visaged war,
Like the sable-hued folds of the mantle of night,
Enveloped the land, its beauty to mar,

Have gone like the dreams of the years that have vanished,
Like the dewdrops that melt at the kiss of the sun,
When love took the place of the demon you banished,
And the Blue and the Gray stand united as one.

From the storm-beaten shores of the far Northern Ocean;
To where the palms wave by the Mexican Sea,
The spirit of discord, of civil commotion,
Like a spectre, arose, and bid liberty flee.

Then the sons of the Southland—no braver e'er battled—
They offered their lives for a cause they deemed right,
When the war dogs were loosed and the musketry rattled,
Virginia was found in the van of the fight.

Aye, brave, too, were those, from each Northern valley,
Who fought for Old Glory, its stripes and its stars,
When the bugle blast echoed the sound of the rally,
They sprang to the fray like true sons of Mars.

In the heart of a Nation, two words are enshrined,
Whose meaning shall last 'till the end of the day,
And around them the tendrils of memory are twined,
They are blazoned in glory—the Blue and the Gray.

Their deeds shall yet live through the far future ages;
These soldiers who met on the wide battle plain,
And the pen of the poet, or wisdom of sages,
Can add not one jot to the sheen of their fame.

We love the traditions the Southland hath cherished,
Of brave men who fell in the thick of the fray.
We remember with pride, now that passion has perished,
Americans all, were the Blue and the Gray.

WHEN THE LEAVES BEGIN TO FALL.

THERE'S a tinge of melancholy, in the sunlight and the breeze,
And the spirit of desolation, seems to brood among the trees;
When the mellow mists of autumn softly hover over all,
When the summer has departed, and the leaves begin to fall.

Gone, the pleasant days of spring-time, and the burning summer's heat;
Gone, the blue-bird and the swallow, from their leafy, cool retreat.
And we feel a note of sadness, in the robin's plaintive call,
When the summer days have ended, and the leaves begin to fall.

When the autumn of our life-time, with its weight of years shall come,
And the spring-time hopes and longings, and the summer's fight, be done,
Shall our hearts be filled with sorrow, at the winter's icy pall?
Or with glad hope of the morrow, when the leaves begin to fall?

SONG OF THE SEA.

I LOVE the song of the sea,—
The pitiless wintry sea,
As it breaks with a roar,
On the Ice-bound shore,
For its song is wild and free.

It sings of power,
In the midnight hour,
Or the dusk of the winter days;
And in angry breath,
It sings of death,
In the depth of its stormy ways.

But better I love the sea,
The magical, tropical sea,
Where the sun gleams warm,
In the track of the storm,
For it softly sings to me.

It sings of love,
And the blue above,
Bends down to the blue of the wave;
Its soothing tone,
Is a song of home,
By shores its waters lave.

DECEMBER.

NO more the mellow sunlight falls,
O'er valley, hill, and town,
And the phantom shapes of the autumn mists,
Give way to the winter's frown.

December's winds are chill and drear,
As a blast from the icy North,
When the storm god stretches his hand afar,
And sends his legions forth.

The scurrying clouds sweep over the sky,
Like waves in fury tossed,
And the moan of the night-wind sorrowful seems,
Like the knell of a spirit lost.

A mournful dirge the night-wind sings,
A dirge for the dying year;
And the hearts of men, as they hear its sound,
Are filled with a nameless fear.

For as the spring and the summer time,
Give way to the winter's blast,
So the joy of youth, and our manhood's prime,
Give way to old age at last.

And like the wild December storms,
That envelop the earth in their gloom;
The shadow of death our souls shall wrap,
In the starless night of the tomb.

RHYME OF THE SEASONS.

THE spring-time hath hope for all living;
Of gladness a plenteous store;
And the summer hath sweets for the giving;
A measure of joy running o'er.

E'en the winter's rude breath shall but find us,
Enthralled by the home's blissful bands;
And the gleam of the white frost around us;
There is wealth in the wide autumn lands.

There's no change in our lives but for reason;
Whether winter, or spring-time, or fall;
The bountiful Lord of the season,
Prepareth his blessings for all.

❋ ❋ ❋

TWO TOILERS.

FAR down 'neath the depths of the Cornish soil,
Are men, whose sinews are hardened by toil,—
Patient, enduring yet brave and strong,
These men who toil through the dark hours long,
While far above them the wild waves roar,
As they break in foam on the rocky shore.
Yet their story is told in prose and rhyme,
And the world has heard of their patience sublime,
For the ore that is mined by their muscle and brawn,
Finds its way to each land that the sun shines on.

There are men who toil through the day and the night,
Bravely battling for home and right,—
Their weapon, the pen, more strong than the sword,
For the fate of a nation may hang on a word.
Yet the world recks not of their deeds sublime,
And their names are not carved on the tablets of time.
For oft times they're humble, and lowly, and poor,
And their struggle is fierce, to keep want from the door,
And men scarce believe that a hero's form,
Can be wrapped in a coat that is ragged and torn.

So, here's just a line, of praise to these men—
Brave, patient, and noble, these knights of the pen,
While others are resting, both body and brain,
From the labor of plotting and scheming for gain,
The journalist toils, with a tireless hand,
To gather the news from every land.
But there's one consolation, and to all its more dear,
Than gold, or words of praise and cheer.
'Tis only this: to have faced each part,
With steady purpose, and fearless heart,
Is better far, when life's sun goes down,
Than to reign a king, with scepter and crown.

IMMORTALITY.

HAST thou, oh, brother, hope of life,
Beyond these ways of storm and strife?
Dost dream of rest beyond the sun,
In beauteous lands, when life is done?
And does that hope thy sad heart cheer,
When sorrows dark pursue thee here?

Answer the Norseman, strong and brave,
In days of old who dared the wave,
Whose ocean steed, the four winds bore,
To many a far-off, fruitful shore;
Owning no law but sword and fire,
His faithful ship his funeral pyre.

"Master of Life, the mighty Thor,
Ruler of heaven and God of war;
He, who through the wintry night,
Kindles the gleam of the northern light;
Guards His children with jealous care,
And giveth heed to the Norseman's prayer.

"When over the sea shall come, at last,
The weird death-call on the midnight blast,
Who would strengthen the slender thread,
Between the living and the dead?
For shall not he who bravely died,
On the wings of the wind to Valhal ride?"

Answer, ye of the sun-kissed lands,
Where the rivers flow over golden sands;
Where love and peace first found a home;
Answer, ye spirits of Greece and Rome:
Had ye hope of immortal life,
Beyond these ways of storm and strife?

"Behold, where father Tiber's stream,
Reflects the sun's departing gleam,
A hundred priests and myriad choirs,
Surround the holy altar fires;
A hundred temples, proudly raised,
Proclaim the gods the Romans praised.

"Or, when this grey, old world was young,
In days of which the bards have sung,
When art and music ruled the while,
O'er Greece, and Delo's lovely isle,
The Grecians praised the god of love,
Or bent the knee to mighty Jove."

Ever hath heart of man been bowed,
The humble poor, the great and proud,
To unseen hands that guard his way,
From childhood's hour to close of day.
All bear their cross of doubt and pain,
By hope of an immortal gain.

The Buddhist claims Nirvana, rest;
The forest warrior scans the west,
And sings his death-song e'er his flight,

Beyond the farther ocean bright.
The Aztec owns the bright sun-god,
And treads where Montezuma trod.

Thus hath the Christian hope been strong,
In human hearts through ages long.
Let scoffers claim their souls are free,
Or prate of grim philosophy;
Yet still we dream of hope and life,
Beyond these ways of storm and strife.

DIALECT AND OTHER POEMS.

THE SOCKS THE GOLFERS WEAR.

I'VE hunted alligators where the "Southland rivers flow,"
And chased the bounding catamount across the frozen snow,
I've followed all the out-door sports on land and on the sea,
But I never wore the kind of socks that come above the knee.

When a fellow stuffs his pantaloons within his checkered hose,
And sets a little monkey cap above his bloomin' nose,
I always look him over, and, somehow, I never fail,
To think, there goes a sand hill crane, with nary sign of tail.

I may ride a streak of lightning, or fight a grizzly bear,
Or sail, with some fool aeronaut, the circumambient air;
I may get drunk, and paint the town, to drive away dull care,
But heaven smite me, if I don the socks those golfers wear.

I'M JUST A LAZY FELLER.

I'M just a lazy feller,
With no special 'scuse fer livin',
Nor half deservin' any gifts
The Lord is always givin'.

But I can't help feelin' happy,
'Bout this time in the Spring,
When the cherry trees are bloomin'
An' I hear the robin's sing.

There ain't no city big enough,
To hold me now, at all,
Since the cherry trees are bloomin',
An' I hear the robin's call.

For the Master, in His goodness,
Made the country fair an' free,
The birds an' flowers an' buddin' trees,
Fer lazy chaps like me.

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SUMMER IN THE SOUTH.

HI, mistah 'coon, in de sycomo' tree,
Yo' think yo' done hid, but ye cayn't fool me,
De ol' dog a-trailin', wid his nose to de groun',
An' yo' cayn't lose yo' track frum dat ol' speckled houn'.

De blackberry ripenin', an' de mellon growin' biggah,
But de Lawd made the possum an' de 'coon fer de niggah.
Summer in de South, an' de moon shinin' bright,
Gwine to see my true love dis hyar blessed night.

Hi, mistah 'coon, in de sycomo' tree,
Yo' bettah come down, fer yo' cayn't fool me.
De ol' dog a barkin', an' de moon shinin' bright,
Gwine to see my true love dis hyar blessed night.

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THE GOOD LORD LOVES THE FARMER.

SOME folks they think creation is all a goin' wrong;
Say we'll have a revolution, an' that it won't be long.
They say as how the workin' man is poor as poor can be;
But the good Lord loves the farmer, an' that's enough fur me.

I don't know much 'bout politics, the tariff nor free trade,
But if we've rain and sunshine, here's one 'ats not afraid
Of them there grindin' plutocrats in this country of the free,
For the good Lord loves the farmer an' that's enough for me.

There's pumpkins in the furrow an' apples on the bough,
Rich stores for comin' Winter that has no terrors now.
Though skies be dark for many, an' the future hid frum view,
The good Lord loves the farmer an' I guess he'll see us thro'.

THE COUNTRY AND THE TOWN.

WE don't half like the city,
With all its sounds and sights,
Its rushin', rattlin' street cars,
And its bright electric lights.

Where mammon's mighty temples
Stand beside the stony ways,
And the roar of business echoes
Through all the gloomy days.

Where people never stop to talk,
Or loiter as they go,
And can never spare a minute,
They always hurry so.

When the smoke of myriad chimneys
Dims the glory of the sun,
And you never feel the cooling breeze
When your day of toil is done.

Where through the livelong day and night
The mob keeps rushin' on,
Like all were bound for kingdom come,
And anxious to be gone.

For man is only mortal,
And some day he'll have to rest,
And we hope to hear the Master say,
"He did his very best."

And how can any good be done,
Is what we'd like to know,
If people never stop to think,
They always hurry so?

No, we like the country better,
Where the birds sing through the day,
Where the pleasant fountains sparkle,
Beside each dusty way.

Where God has written on the earth,
In language plain and clear,
The story of creation,
The hearts of men to cheer.

You can read it in the dewdrops,
As they sparkle on the leaves;
In the murmur of the zephyrs,
And the waving forest trees.

In the sunshine and the rain-fall;
The message of His love,
And at midnight, in the stars that gleam,
In silence up above.

Why, the very joy of livin',
Will make both heart and brain,
Throb with new life and vigor,—
Just make you young again.

When God made man, he put him
In a garden rich and fair,
With birds, and flowers, and fountains,
And perfume laden air.

He didn't build a great big house,
With towers, broad and high,
And set it on a hill-top,
Where it almost touched the sky.

And, somehow, it always seemed to us,
Fate was more apt to frown,
Upon the man who dwells within,
The busy, bustling town.

We suppose we lack ambition,
That meteor of the mind,
That leads men from the paths of peace,
The bubble, fame, to find.

So, we take things sort o' calm-like,
As we loiter by the way;
And we reckon we'll not regret it,
When we reach the judgment day.

For we know we'll all stand equal,
Before the great white throne,
When the Master Shepherd counts His sheep,
And comes to claim His own.

* * *

LESSONS TO LEARN.

WHENEVER the sky looks cold and gray,
And even the robins have gone away;
When the cold north wind begins to blow,
And scatter the flakes of falling snow,
As into the blazing fire I gaze,
I dream once more of boyhood days.
When supper was over, then father would say,
"You've housed the stock, and given 'em hay,
An' plenty of wood piled up to burn?
Well, don't forget, you've lessons to learn."

How hard and long those lessons seemed ;
As I conned them o'er, I oftimes dreamed
Of the time to come, when, school days past,
I should see the great, wide world at last,—
When no more I'd hear, in that quiet home,
The well-known words and kindly tone,
When supper was over, and father would say,
"You've housed the stock and given 'em hay,
An' plenty of wood piled up to burn?
Now, don't forget, you've lessons to learn."

Oh, the dreams we dream in our youthful years ;
And our hopes, that end in bitter tears,
As we weave the web and the mystical plan,
The aim, and the life, and the doom of man.
I'd give the wisdom the world has taught,
And all the joys that the years have brought,
To live again in the self-same way—
The days when father used to say,
"You've housed the stock, and given 'em hay,
An' plenty of wood piled up to burn?
Well, don't forget, you've lessons to learn."

THE POET.

HE toiled from morn 'til close of day,
With energy gigantic.
He dressed each merry roundelay,
In vestures rich, romantic.

He turned off poems, grave or gay,
To catch the public eye.
He lived on one square meal a day,
But still fame passed by.

But now in social maze he's seen,
The critics call him great.
He writes stuff for a magazine,
The devil couldn't translate.

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THE EDITOR-MAN.

Dedicated to the members of the West Virginia Editorial Association.—Wheeling Register.

The following beautiful poem was written by M. S. Cornwell, of Romney, in response to a request from the President of the Editorial Association, that he write something for the recent session. Mr. Cornwell is in poor health and was unable to attend himself, but sent in this tribute to his fellow craft, and it was read at the banquet by the President, J. Slidell Brown:

THERE are poets who sing of the spice-laden breeze,
That waves the green boughs of the orange and pine;
Or the wild, lonely beauty of the tropical seas, [shine.
When the night wind is hushed, and the Southern stars

And some sing of war, and the clashing of arms,
Resounds through the rythmical roll of their measure;
Or, others of love, and its magical charms,
And the lode-star that gleams in the palace of pleasure.

Had the goddess of poesy smiled on my birth,
Or the music of nature been born in my soul,
I would fashion my song for the lowly of earth,
O'er whose sad hearts the seas of adversity roll.

There are millions who bow to the rich and the great,
Whom fortune has rocked in her cradle of gold,
But few to lend comfort, or pity the fate
Of the desolate ones whom the universe holds.

When fortune shall frown on their uneven road,
Or death come to visit their hearth-stone again,
There is always a kind word to lighten each load,
From the friend to the humble, the editor-man.

So, here's to the brave, patient knigths of the pen;
I give you this tribute--gain-say it, who can,
In sorrow or joy, the truest of men,
Is the friend to the humble, the editor-man.

* * *

THE WAY OF THE WORLD.

I TELL no tale of a warrior brave,
Who fell 'mid the battle's roar,
Nor of sailor bold, who breasted the wave,
Three hundred leagues from shore.

But only a lay of a country lad,
Who dwelt by the eastern sea,
Whose simple heart the winds made glad,
When they blew o'er the grassy sea.

They whispered to him of a sun-bright land,
At the gates of the golden west,
Where he, by the might of his brain and hand,
Should shine as the strongest and best.

A dark-eyed maiden, his boyhood love,
Would wait 'til he came again,
With heart as tender as a mourning dove,
Through sunshine, storm and rain.

And they said the things that lovers will say,
While men and maidens are young;
As long as the human heart hath sway,
As long as the soul hath tongue.

John Henry Watkins, my hero bold,
Left his home by the eastern sea,
And black-eyed Susan, whose story is told,
Stayed on by the wind-blown lea.

Alas, for the hope of the human heart,
And the sorrows that come between,
She is married now, since they drifted apart,
And dwells 'mid the pine woods green.

Six dark-haired urchins, of varying size,
Play 'round their mother's knee,
At even-tide when the night-winds rise,
And blow toward the restless sea.

And John Henry Watkins, who promised so much,
Alas, he could do no more;
In the straggling village of Deadwood Gulch,
He clerks in a grocery store.

A PLEASANT WORD.

SOME people never have a pleasant word handy, or at least they deny themselves the luxury of their use. Did you ever take time to think that it is just as easy to smile as to frown? Well, there is as much difference between the two acts as between a gloomy day in winter and the sunshine in summer, and the influence on those around you, just as marked. I have two women in my mind that illustrate my meaning. The one was, and still is, postmistress in a little village where I spent some months, and so I saw her every day. The second time I called for my mail we got acquainted, and the third day we were good friends. Were we ever introduced? Oh no. But that cheery little woman had learned that I was an invalid, and she had known suffering herself, and could sympathize with others. She greeted every one with a pleasant word and a kindly smile and I never left her presence without a more cheerful and contented feeling. May her days be long in the land.

The other one of whom I speak kept a hotel, and I was one of the unfortunates who dined at her table. If she ever smiled, it was long ago, for her forbidden visage bore no marks of such relaxation. I used to bolt my

meals to get away from the house, for in her presence I always felt like the air was charged with lightning. Perhaps it was brimstone. The Lord deliver me from such again. Which one of these would you rather imitate? If you have troubles, keep them to yourself, others may have greater. Just try how it goes to be cheerful and you will feel ten years younger.

* * *

BROWN, THE BEACH-COMBER.

HE wasn't good to look at, and would scarcely pass muster, even in an ordinary crowd, in these latter days when I knew him. I made his acquaintance as he sat in the door-way of his humble home, smoking his pipe in peace, and gazing out upon the broad lagoon that stretched away toward the west beneath the rays of the setting sun. Beyond, the forest trees of the mainland were outlined against a sky of molten gold. A mournfully monotonous roar of the surf was in our ears, and the vesper song of the mocking bird floated out on dreamy air. The palm trees cast long shadows about this humble abode, and, as the day died out of the sky, the queer old hermit opened his lips and his heart, and spake to me of the past and his lonely life upon this lonely shore.

The story is too long to tell here, but to me his life conveyed a lesson never to be forgotten; a story of lost opportunities and a woman's love bartered for the red wine's glow; of misery and remorse, and, at last, the lonely waiting here, in sight and sound of the restless

sea, for the end so soon to come. Softly I wrung his hand in the gathering gloom, and silently glided across the whispering waters. The stars came out in the tropic sky to point my path, and, ever and anon, the marsh fowls flew across the milky way, uttering their plaintive, mournful cry, like the wail of a spirit in despair. As the night-breeze hummed through the cordage of my little barque, I thought of the human wreck I had just left behind—stranded here by the tides of time in their ceaseless flow.

Once again I saw him, or rather the form that had held his world-worn soul. Kind friends had gathered to pay the last sad rite to the unclaimed dead—unclaimed? No, for clasped in his nerveless hand was the portrait of a lovely woman, and above him, shown through tears, the same face, grown older, and with deeper lines upon the cheek and brow. The woman he had loved and lost, and made drain the cup of sorrow to its dregs, had forgiven, as only a woman's heart can forgive, and come to him again. But, too late. The shattered derelict had drifted out upon that shoreless sea, that men call death.

* * *

BE A MAN.

I READ a short paragraph in a newspaper a few days ago, which set me thinking deeply. It was only a brief mention of one of those numerous casualities, that go to make up the history of a single day in this great big country of ours. Only a word, concerning an engineman—poor and unknown—who had stood to

his post, with white, set face, and met death, to save his train. Had that man fought beside the great Napoleon, he would have worn the cross of the Legion, and commanded a regiment. But he was a hero, although his name can never be known to fame. Every man, in his own silent, lonely struggle of life, may be a hero or a coward. And his life work will show which he has been. This much—be a man, and bow neither to mouldy prejudice nor narrow opinion.

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DREAMS.

THE poet has uttered a prayer of thanksgiving for the blessing of sleep. But who has thanked the fates for the gift of dreams? How easy to lay aside the cares of our weary lives and slip away into the beauteous valley of dreams. The best and truest inspirations come to us then, filling our souls with peace and joy. In that enchanted world all is pure, and fair, and free from sin and strife I recall dreams which sometimes make me wonder if the spirit wanders abroad, led by unseen hands, to worlds of light. Visions as fair as those which cheered St. John upon the lonely isle, and their memory lingers to cheer the weary soul through other days. It is good to feel the thrill of life and mingle with our kind; and it is very good to wander in the pleasant land of dreams and listen to the listless lapping of the tides of time upon the radiant shores of the world of the infinite.

WHAT WE LEARN BY EXPERIENCE.

IT does seem like every boy has to learn a lot of things by sad experience. At a certain age, he generally begins to part his hair in the middle, and the increasing height of his collar denotes the bent of his intellect. He has been smitten by some fair damsel and time alone can cure him, He begins to chafe at parental restraint, and yearns for a wide sphere of action. A good antidote is to hitch him to a garden plow, and stimulate his actions with a good-sized sprout ; as the years go by, the dreams fade and the old-time glamour is no more. Many a man, with a tinge of silver in his hair, would like to exchange his end of the matrimonial yoke for a grip on that garden plow, even with the old man and the hickory sprout at the other end of the beam.

But, as gray hairs begin to come, we are apt to grow pessimistic. When the mountains don their gorgeous autumn mantle, I often am carried back to boyhood days. And the man who missed spending his boyhood on a farm, missed the best of life. The 'coon hunts by moonlight had their charm, but the apple-butter boilings were the acme of enjoyment. Did you ever stir apple-butter by the flickering firelight? Of course, it takes two, and the others amuse themselves indoors, as they should. And, oh, well, you know the things that youth will feel and say, better than I can tell you, And later comes the plays and the games, and, mayhap, a pleasant walk in the moonlight, with a clinging form beside you. How bright the world looked then, and how different now. And yet it has not changed, only you and me.

I like to talk to old men. The men who saw the railroad come into the country, and who remember the first telegraph, and the infancy of steam navigation. I like to hear them tell of the times when they lived in log cabins, and hunted deer among the mountains, with the old long rifles, so deadly in the hands of a woodsman. They wore home spun, and rode horse-back to church; their simple wants were supplied by their native soil. They had health and contentment, which are better than riches. And I sometimes wonder if it were not better to have lived then, than in this lightning age.

* * *

DAY DREAMS.

THE strange old poet, Robert Burns, once expressed, in his quaint phrase, the thought, that no matter how intimate we may become with another fellow creature, there are still some chapters of our lives which are kept sacred, as it were, to the memory of the past, and which we never open to the gaze of any mortal. There is a world of truth conveyed in this. Every man or woman has thoughts and feelings which go to make up the inner and higher life, and which are never revealed, even to those who are nearest and dearest by the ties of earth.

The more of a dreamer a man is, the more interesting to him are his own thoughts; the more he lives within himself, and the more real pleasure there is for him in life. When the mellow autumn sunlight falls upon the hills, lending its weird glamor to every object

in the landscape, a thousand fancies are conjured up, by magic, as it were, until the heart of the man is carried back to scenes long past, and almost forgotten, away from the fierce turmoil and unrest of life. He is better, because dreams are never evil. He sees marvellous beauties in the works of nature, with a poet's eye, he worships at nature's shrine, and, deep down in his heart of hearts, he hears the voice of nature's God, soothing his troubled soul to rest.

* * *

A STUDY IN BLACK AND WHITE.

AS a rule, the southern negro is a lazy varmint, and some of his kind are vicious. As a rule, the southern white man is honest and courageous, and, occasionally, he is keen and sagacious in business, as well. But there are exceptions, they do say, to all rules, and this exception is not a fancy sketch, but a chronicle of facts.

Down where the Santa Lucia mingles its sluggish waters with the salt tide of the Indian River, which is no river at all, only a land-locked lagoon that skirts the southeasern shore of Florida—not so many years ago, were wide acres of public land. Of course that was before the locomotive was heard in the land, and long before a United States Senator had made the region famous by establishing there his winter abode. Of course, in those days, it was a week's journey to reach a telegraph office, but the broad lands were there, the fish disported

in the sun kissed waters, and the wild orange ripened by the woodland ways. And in those halcyon days, when all the country was passed by the peaceful cattle-ranger, a sturdy African came to make his home not far from the Santa Lucia's waters, who came to be known far and near, as Nassau Tom. He came from the Bahamas, and he brought with him a wife of ebony hue and a drove of pickaninnies as black and as noisy as the rice bird of the wild swamp lands. Of course, he held no title deed to the land upon which his palmetto shock was built, but later on the State made good his claim to eighty acres. His nearest neighbor was one Simeon Baxter, alias Cracker Sim, a type of a disappearing class. Of course, Simeon Baxter, cattle-raiser and southern gentleman, looked down in lofty scorn upon a "Nassau nigger". But side by side they have lived for twenty years, and their stories are a study for the thoughtfully inclined.

But why prolong the tale? Recently I passed through a most beautiful orange grove, clean and carefully tended, with a mass of fragrant, snowy blossoms. On a ridge of high hammock, facing the sea, was a neat cottage, and before it were irrigated gardens to delight the eye. Whose was it, say you? Nassau Tom's, of course, who had wrought all this comfort from the thirsty soil by the magic of hard labor. Down the road a little way, I passed a log cabin, where was a hungry-looking mob of dogs dozing in the sun. Upon the piazza sat a grizzled specimen of humanity, smoking a corn-cob pipe, and dreaming the hours away. Who is he, say you? Simeon Baxter, to be sure, cattle-raiser, aforesaid, who was himself raised on hog and hominy, and craves neither the

products nor the customs of other lands. For the way of the cow-cracker is passing strange and changeth not.

An exception to the rule, say you? Well, may be; but, having seen and heard, I am constrained to believe and record.

* * *

MAJOR ANDERSON, OF SAVANNAH.

ONCE upon a time I had the honor of meeting Major Anderson, of Savannah. I do not refer to the gentleman who commanded Fort Sumpter, but Major Anderson, of Georgia, sah; a brother of General Anderson, and himself a brave Confederate officer. The Major is an old-time southern gentleman, who believes in the South, and the destiny of her people, and loves to talk of the times before the war. I spent a very pleasant afternoon with him, on the breeze-swept veranda of a southern hotel, looking out upon the southern sea, and listening to his stories of the old and the new South.

"After the war," said he, "we moved to Savannah, and the old plantation, on the river, was rented to our former slaves. Along in June, I concluded to go out to the old place and see how the boys were coming on with their crops. When I reached the boundary of the plantation, I never saw a more forlorn-looking sight. Rank weeds towered above the cotton rows, and blackberries were ripening in the cornfields. Coming along the dusty highway was a slouching figure, armed with a fishing-pole, bare-footed and bear-headed. As he drew near I

recognized my chief tenant and confidential man of affairs. 'Hello John,' said I. 'In the name of heavens, where are all the niggers, and why ain't you all at work? You black rascal, do you expect to raise anything this year?' 'Hi, dar! Clar, to goodness, if dat ain't Mars Bill. Glad to see yo', sho. Laws, sah, yo' lookin' monstrous well. 'Clar to goodness yo' is. Axin' 'bout de boys, sah? Da's a most'ous no 'count set, sah; but dis am de mos' bountifullest season dat I eber see. De jack fish a runnin', sah, so pow'ful thick dat tree or fo' try to git yo' hook at once. An' de 'possums, deed, Mars Bill, I neber seed de beat ub dem 'possums. Da jis' ebery whar. Drive on, Mars Bill; drive on, an' make yo'self to home, sah. I jis' gwine down heah to see 'bout dem triflin' niggahs, sah.'"

The Major flecked the ashes from his cigar and added: "The black man is a child of nature. He is content with nature's bounty, and care comes not nigh him."

* * *

A DREAM OF BOYHOOD DAYS.

WHY is it, that the early summer always sets us to dreaming of boyhood days? I can't tell, unless it is because the advent of the summer brought new joys to the country lad. It meant a thousand delightful rambles by wood and stream, and, best of all, it was fishing time. Did you ever spend two hours digging for bait under every convenient burdock, and then trudge off two or theee miles in the morning sunshine, to the

nearest stream? If you didn't, you don't know what real happiness means.

Why, a President of the United States, on his way to be inaugurated isn't half as happy as the boy who's going fishing. A convenient eddy is found and how eagerly you'd unwind that old fishing line and make it fast to the pole. And then, the peace, and quietude, and happy expectancy, waiting for the fish to bite. Some boys can't be contented to sit still and wait but they try first one place and then another, and grow cross, and complain, and they lose all the good of the sunshine, and the bird's songs overhead, and go home disappointed.

That's just the way with some men. They're never contented with their lot, but go from place to place, or from one occupation to another, instead of taking root in the soil, and gathering about them home, love and tried friends, and so they miss the best their is in life, and die complaining and disappointed.

And, by the way, speaking of boys, their pastimes and employments, or men, and their foibles, we are reminded to say, that a boy's future can be guaged by his early habits, and the boy's habits are largely the result of home training. I am seldom on the street at night, but when I am, I never fail to see crowds of boys, loafing on corners, and frequently, in passing, hear language which these same boys never use at home. I wouldn't give much for what all those boys will be worth twenty years from now.

I hate to see a man distrust his neighbors, and everyone with whom he comes in contact. I hate to hear a man decry human nature, for no matter how much of

bad there is in us, there is mighty apt to be a latent streak of kindness somewhere. We never know what friendship and sympathy mean, in our day of prosperity. But when adversity, or sickness, or sorrow comes upon us, it is then that we know and feel the strength of human kindness. It is then our hearts are lifted up above the sordid things of earth, and we are made to feel that much in life is better than gold or the applause of men.

* * *

THE GIFT OF ORIGINALITY.

DID you ever see a man who possessed, in a perfect degree, the gift of originality? Who never copied expression or mannerism from other men? Well, I think I did once, and I'll tell you something of this *rara avis*, while I think about it.

He was a native of the sea-girdled Bahamas, and had all the easy going *bonhommie* of the tropics in his make-up. His skin was the color of polished ebony, and his frame was gigantic. His speech was the jargon of the West Indian blacks, but his ideas and expressions were original. One sample of his arguments will suffice.

I had helped to put a mast and center-board and rig a leg-o'-mutton sail in a crazy rowboat, which was thereby converted into a tolerable sort of dinky, which would make fair speed if you didn't try to come up too close to the wind. Well, we hired a young gentleman of color to catch bait for us, and, of course, furnished him a boat. With all the assurance of a blue-water seaman, he hoisted

sail and away, making a bee line for a yawl-rigged yacht anchored far out in the lagoon.

Surely, thought I, the fool sees where he is going. But, no; there was a crash, as the mast of the dinky caught the bowsprit of the yacht, and the rigging of our gallant craft went by the board in a jiffy. It was in speaking of this incident that my original genius remarked: "Hi! dat fool niggah know no mo' 'bout a boat dan a white man do 'bout a mule."

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CHRISTMAS IN THE FAR SOUTH.

ALMOST by the time this reaches the readers of the "Review", Christmas will be here. Millions of homes will be filled with rejoicing, as around the fireside are gathered loved ones from far and near, reunited at this happy season. There lingers in my memory no brighter picture than a Christmas Eve of my boyhood days. The flames leaping up the wide chimney, and shedding their warmth and light upon a circle of happy faces. No costly gifts were there—no anticipation of brilliant festivities on the morrow—only contentment, and love, and peace. What matter, how storms rage without? If the world be robed in a mantle of white, the comfort within only seems the greater.

How many such pictures may be seen among the hills of West Virginia on this Christmas Eve? Perhaps the lad who sits in the glow of the firelight, dreams of future years. Of himself, as an actor in the drama of life, or of strange lands, that he shall see when home is

left behind. Alas! such thoughts will come to the mind of youth, and, in after years, perchance, that same lad, a stranger in a strange lands will dream more fondly of his childhood home, and, as the bells ring in the joyous Christmas tide, his breast will be filled with that nameless melancholy, which only the lonely ones of earth may know.

We cannot all give costly gifts to those we love, and make them happy. But we can, at least, cheer some poorer mortal by deed or word of kindness, which will make us all the happier for the doing or the saying.

Last year, I came on Christmas Eve, to a little village in South Florida, where it was my intention to pass the remainder of the winter. After dark the population of the village assembled to witness the distribution of presents, which burdened a bountiful Christmas tree. In all that merry crowd I was the only on who felt himself a stranger and alone. But they had not even forgotten me. The venerable Santa Claus, who presided over the exercises of the evening, presented me with a share of the good things provided, and welcomed me, in the name of the people, to their village. That little present was, in itself, of no value, but the words which accompanied it were priceless. They made me realize the bond of human brotherhood, that reaches from the peasant in his hovel, to the king upon his throne—made me feel that, though a stranger, I was among friends. It is such little acts as these which sustain our faith in human kind.

Last Christmas I sat out in the sunshine, and listened to the birds singing among the palmettos and live oak and ate oranges fresh from the tree. How unlike all that

this country is. Only the bright sunshine, and no singing birds nor luxuriant vegetation, and yet, somehow, this land has a charm all its own. When I look upon these towering mountains, and out, across the wide, desert plains, I feel the same emotion as when I stood for the first time upon the shore of the Atlantic, and saw the breakers rolling in across the world, voicing their tale of storms and shipwreck all around the earth. A feeling that I am alone with God and nature, and I realize the vastness of His created universe, and the littleness of human endeavor.

Perhaps, there are some, who will read these words, who feel that they have no cause for happiness or rejoicing—who, perhaps, are borne down by a load of grief. But is there any sorrow great enough to make us forget our faith in eternal justice? Let us, who bear grievious burdens of poverty, or pain, or bitter disappointments, remember that even the shelter of Bethlehem's Inn was not vouchsafed to the Virgin Mother and the New-born King. Think of the starving children of Erin, and the misery of India. Think what others are suffering, and your heart will be lifted up in gratitude for the many blessings you enjoy.

El Paso, Texas, Dec. 16, 1897.

DOWN BY SAVANNAH.

IN the course of my summer rambles, I often love to take a book and steal away to some quiet spot, where I can lie upon the green turf and look up to the waving trees, and the blue sky above, and revel in the solitude of nature. And resting thus, I love to moralize upon the drama of human existence as I have seen it.

Down by the olden city of Savannah, is beautiful Bonadventure, the city of the dead. No sound of the busy world enters this sacred enclosure. Above the moss-grown gravestones the green, live oaks wave their festooned boughs, and in the early spring-time the yellow jessamine and the wild woodbine fling their flaming blossoms down. Amid these quiet shades, on a balmy evening, not so long ago, I sat me down to dream away a quiet hour, and incidentally glean from the pages of Poe, rich food for future thought. As the moments glided by, I heard a murmur of voices, and a youth and maiden came hand in hand along the sylvan path, and seated themselves upon a fallen gravestone, near my pleasant retreat.

A clump of oleanders but partially hid me from view, and I sincerely wished that they were mindful of my presence; but who was ever mindful of the world when wandering in the path this youth and maid were treading? His face glowed with the light of hope and strength, for was not all the world before him, to be conquered and laid at the feet of her he loved. And in the face of this gentle daughter of the South, I saw the marvel of the soul's awakening. The volume I held slipped noiselessly to the ground, for was not here the sweetest

form of life before me? Who would dare to disturb their golden dream? The monuments around bore no message for them. And hath it not been ever so, since time was young?

"The living above, and the dead below".

All the tragedy, and sorrow, and pathos of life are forgotten when love is strong. And who would rob our lives of this one fleeting glimpse of joy?

Softly I stole away, and these two will never know that a wandering stranger's silent prayer for their happiness was ever made. Sadly I wended my way back to the streets of the stately old town, to be borne upon the ocean wave away from this sunny land of romance. But in my heart there was a voice which said, the best of life is youth and love.

* * *

LOVE OF GOLD.

THERE is no human passion so potent as the love of gold. For it men have bartered their honor, their country, and all else that humanity holds dear. To-day adventurers are madly rushing to the frozen North—many of them to certain death—in search of gold. By the time they reach Klondyke, winter will be on, and all communication cut off. For eight long months the fortune hunters must endure the hardships of their icy prison, and the question is, where is the food to be obtained to feed the thousands who are rushing into the country. There is no truer proposition than that this glittering yellow substance is the fruitful cause of the world's misery.

TWO LETTERS.

IN this day of telegraphs and telephones, the business of every-day life is carried on with the speed of thought. But the advent of these lightning messengers has not rendered the good, old fashion of letter writing obsolete. Our messages of love and friendship are put upon paper in the pain's-taking way of old, and are seen only by those for whom intended.

And how such messages of joy or sorrow may brighten or darken our lives. I call to mind a day that will never be forgotten—a day of perfect sunshine in the far south—a day passed in solitude and meditation. Yet it is for neither of these things that it is a day to be remembered, but because of two letters which came to me, to make the sunshine fairer, and to banish solitude.

Without emotion, or even curiosity, I opened the first one, and began to read. It was written by a lawyer of my native State. A man whose name is a synonym for honor and integrity; a high souled christian gentleman whom I am proud to call a friend. It was a letter such as only a manly man can write—a man whose soul is great enough to grasp the things of life and death, to love his fellow men. And as I read, again, and yet again, I thought, and has my feeble, erring life been such as to draw about me such friends as these, and "grapple them to my soul with hooks of steel"? If so, I have not lived in vain. That subtle, mysterious bond of human sympathy had changed my day of solitude into a day of rejoicing.

The other letter would have delighted the heart of an autograph hunter, for it was written in the quaintly

artistic hand, and graced with the signature of James Whitcomb Riley, the master singer of our day and generation. What claim, say you, had I upon the time of him whom men delight to honor? None but my love for him and admiration for his greatness, and yet he spoke as brother unto brother, this poet, who daily hears a world's applause.

That letter is at once a poem and sermon. I have it framed and treasured, and shall keep it as a priceless possession. But treasured in my heart are his kindly words of hope and encouragement. "Remain firmly superior to all trials," he wrote, "keep sound of soul, and always hale of faith in all good things. Work, and enduringly rejoice in your work, and utter it ever like a jubilant prayer."

God bless honest, noble "Jim" Riley, whose work has power to brighten the merry life of childhood, or lend peace to the sorrowing soul of age. He little dreamed how much his kindly optimistic letter would cheer a lonely heart and brighten a clouded life. May the blessing he bestowed return ten-fold to rest upon his head in after years.

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A SOUTHERN GENTLEWOMAN.

BIRTH and breeding may be an accident, but the influences thrown around us in our early years, cling through life, and their effect is never wholly lost. Not long since, I met and conversed with a venerable lady, of a type which is only to be found in the South.

The sort which impress you at once with the thought that no mean or sordid action has ever soiled their lives.

In the soft and melodious accents of her land, she told me something of her history, of the old days before the war, when the families of the slave-holders lived in luxury and refinement—the time when the better classes did not engage in the eternal struggle for gain. Of the dark days that followed—of broken family ties, of want and poverty, and, lastly, of brighter days, with children and grandchildren around her, and a happy home in the new South And, through it all, she has remained the same sweet and loving woman that she was, when, forty years ago, a southern gentleman won her pure heart and gentle hand.

Verily, nowhere beneath the skies, are women to be found like unto the daughters of the South. And may the daughters of to-day shape their lives by their mothers of yesterday.

* * *

SOME REFLECTIONS.

I HAVE often wondered what made the southern people so easy-going and good-natured—so smiling and polite, and I have come to the conclusion that it is just the sunshine, Modern progress has devised a thousand different kinds of furnaces and steam heaters, and devised electric, and gas, and calcium lights, but they can't rob us of the sunshine, nor can they equal it. Scientists tell us that in crowded cities, where the sunshine does not penetrate, that microbes breed and thrive.

They say a man must not kiss his wife, or a young fellow his sweetheart, for fear of microbes. And I say, just get out in the sunshine, and the microbes will all take their departure.

I pity the boy that had to grow up in a city, and never rode a horse bare-backed, nor had stone-bruises, nor stole watermelons. A boy's surplus energies are bound to be expended in some direction, and in the country he'll bark his shins, or, mayhap, get licked occasionally, but he don't run to cigarettes nor spindle-shanks like his cousins in the city. If I had four hundred boys, I'd want 'em all raised on a farm, and if they didn't tie the cats' tails together, or attempt to ride the bull calf occasionally, I wouldn't expect much of them when they grew up.

And this brings us to the question of, why do boys leave the farm? Here philosophers step in and tell us that "it is a longing for companionship", or, "because home is not made attractive". I say, it is no such stuff. It's because our modern money-getting mania is inherited by every boy, and he leaves the dear old home because he wants to get rich, and if he has been raised to habits of industry, he'll outstrip the cigarette-puffing college chap every time.

But talk about a farmer boy getting lonesome, that's all bosh. Why, I go out in the forest 'most every day, and every time I see new beauties. Sometimes I sit down on a log, and, if the mosquitos would leave me alone, I could sit there half a day. The wind sighs dreamily through the tall palmettos and moss-hung live oaks, and an old brown thrush will come down close

beside me, and half-timidly hunt for sweet-berries among the leaves. The gray doves are cooing here and there, and all nature seems made for my especial benefit. Or, other days, I go out on the river, and, alongside some mangrove island, wait for the fish to bite. Perhaps they do, and perhaps they don't, but what's the difference? The old ocean sings its lullaby, the soft southern breezes steal across the wide waters, and the sunlight bathes the world in glory. The white and gray gulls come in with the tide, and float by me, upon the dancing waves, without apparent fear. Or, occasionally, a long-legged stork will wade up close among the mangroves, as though to inquire why I tresspassed upon his domain. Learn to live close to the heart of nature, and you will find a cure for all the ills of body or mind.

Almost every country has some advantages and some disadvantages, and I reckon it's all right. Florida has tropical fruits and fresh vegetables about all the year, and plenty of fish, and oysters, and game, and the finest climate this side of the New Jerusalem, but she has no firesides. When the old man comes in at night, one boy may be down in the swamp hunting 'possums, another on the river fishing, and the girls gone for a frolic somewhere, and so the old folks drape their mosquito net around them, and lie down to pleasant dreams.

One of the happiest recollections of any man's life who was raised on a northern farm, is of the long winter evenings around the fireside. I don't mean a little, old dingy stove, but one of those good, old-fashioned, broad fire-places that were found in every country home. Supper over, the family all gathered 'round, and happiness

and peace reigned supreme. Perhaps, there is a dreamy look in the dear old mother's eyes, as she gazes into the glowing embers, and thinks of other days. And at the happy, careless laugh of one of the children, she looks up suddenly, and the far-away look gives place to a gentle smile, as she resumes her knitting and her contemplation.

How we all remember those halcyon days that will come no more forever. And when we turn from the night-mare of this work-aday world, to gaze for a moment upon the long-gone past, is it any wonder that a tear-drop trickles down the cheek? But it is not sorrow that fills the heart.

Every one has his troubles, too, just like every country has its disadvantages. To-day I fell in with an old gentleman who lives all alone, in a little garden spot among the pine woods, and he brings the choicest vegetables to the village, and has a thriving young orchard of fig trees, and, I thought, here is a man who knows and cares nothing for the vanities of life and who is contented and happy. But he, too, had a grievance. The irrepressible razor-backs were the bane of his existance. They would eat up his young vegetables, and no fence will turn them when they scent forage. He had rich Savannah land that might be made profitable, if it wasn't for the expense of fencing.

And so I turned grimly away, murmuring, "Good Lord, is there no contented man still living?" Well, Solomon said that it was all vanity and vexation of spirit. And as he built the temple, and was a success in the mining and lumber business, and was a ship owner, like

Mark Hanna besides being King of Israel, and having nearly a thousand wives, and more sense than all the rest of us, we'll have to take his word for it.

HAWK'S PARK, FLA., Dec. 29, 1896.

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A PLEA.

WE frequently hear it said of an individual, in tones of disparagement, that "he is young". Well, what if he is? Is this good and sufficient reason why he should be ignored in his profession, and turned down politically at every opportunity? The world's history furnishes abundant proof of the superior activity, and, in many cases, superior intelligence of young men.

Rienzi was but a young man when the rhythmic melody of his words first awoke responsive echoes in the hearts of the Roman populace. Edward, the Black Prince, had a young man's blood of fire in his veins, and a young man's heart to dare, when the French hosts were scattered, as by the breath of a whirlwind, before his path, on the bloody field of Azincourt.

And so all time shall prove. Although age brings experience and riper wisdom, yet the enthusiasm and restless energy of youth is lacking, and the old man bows down before the weight of obstacles which the young man would conquer.

Is discretion lacking? Not so. The young man of intelligence views every action as a step leading toward that future of which he has dreamed, while the older

man does not feel a like responsibility. Is his mind less active? William Cullen Bryant wrote his greatest poem ere twenty summers had cast their "flecking shadows on his head". Because the passion fire of his young heart leaped up in dazzling flames ere its brightness had been quenched by the waters of disappointment and despair.

* * *

JONES' MOTOR.

THE first time I ever heard of Jones was several years ago, when I read in the papers about his ostrich farm on Merritt's Island, down at Cape Canaveral. Well, I have since learned that the ostriches died, one at a time, and when the last one was dead, Jones was some ten thousand dollars poorer than when he left the dominions of King Menelek, of Abyssinia, with his drove of ostriches. That was the first fool freak I know of that Jones performed, as I know nothing of him prior to that time, save that he hailed from England. However, all this has nothing to do with my present story, which concerns Jones' wonderful motor.

Old Pierre Lorillard, as every one knows, is a millionaire tobacco man, but, perhaps, some don't know that he used to spend the winters down on the east coast of Florida. He had all sorts of boats, and among others, a big hulk of a house-boat, in which he kept his horses and carriages. Two years ago they had a big October gale down there, that blew one corner of the Atlantic Ocean into the lagoons, and the people called it a tidal wave. It blew Lorillard's old house-boat away from its

moorings, and drove it hard and fast aground in the head of a blind creek, among the Mangrove Islands, two miles from Smyrna.

Now, a big house-boat is a good thing to have in the water, but it's a mighty unwieldly thing on dry land, and, as a gale was not likely to come from the south and drive Mr. P. Lorillard's house-boat back to its moorings, no one considered it of much value. However, Jones wanted to perfect his new motor. It was specially designed, so he said, to propel water craft, and here was his chance. So he purchased theafore said Horse-house boat for the extravagant sum of twenty-five dollars, and took up his residence thereon.

Only a few hundred yards of mud separated his huge boat from deep water, and so, at low tide, Jones shoveled mud, week after week, until he had cut a canal to the nearest channel. Then, at high tide, when there was a full moon, he floated her out, and behold Admiral Jones and his flagship. His next care was to keep the thing from getting aground again at the first high tide, and so he always anchored in sheltered coves, and never attempted to move except when there was a dead calm and a slack tide.

Soon is became noised about that Jones was perfecting his wonderful motor, and would soon be able to manage his unwieldly craft like a toy. I used to talk with him when he came ashore for water or provisions, but I never found out anything about the motor except that it was an application of some new sort of power, and that it was going to revolutionize mechanics.

One afternoon I dropped slowly down the channel

wherein Jones and his boat happened at that time to be anchored. I was trying to tempt those wary little red and gold pig fish which abound in tropic waters. The pool where the big house-boat lay looked inviting, and I cast anchor and began to make ready my tackle. Meanwhile I observed that Jones was constructing a propeller for his craft, which closely resembled, on a larger scale, the sort of "flutter wheels" I used to build when I was a boy.

The sound of a hammer in the cabin suddenly ceased, and the big, burly Englishman stepped out on the afterdeck and enquired what we expected to catch. "Pig fish," said I. "Pig fish? Well, there is only one place hereabouts you'll find 'em. You see that oyster bar standing out yonder from that Island?" I saw the oyster bar. "Well, drop anchor about fifty feet to the southward, and there you'll find 'em."

On we went, lazily drifting with the tide, until the locality he named was reached. I swung the anchor overboard. There was a splash, about four feet of wet rope slipped through my hands, and the anchor fetched up on the bottom. Then I knew Jones had lied to get us out of his neighborhood, and my companion, an Allachua cracker, by the name of Rawlings, knew it, too, for he stood up in the stern sheets and made some very uncomplimentary remarks concerning Mr. Jones.

"Shall we beat back through the cut, and look the ground over again?" said I to Rawlings. Casting his eye toward the sun, which floated in a purplish haze just above the tops of the palmettos on the mainland, "I've got my cows to milk," said Rawlings, "and the old

woman will have supper ready." And shoreward we shaped our course.

As we pulled our boat up on the beach, Rawlings looked disgustedly at the three or four lonesome little red and gold fish in the bottom of the boat, and tossed them into the water.

"Well," said he, "of all the curious cusses I ever seen, that there Jones knocks the 'simmon. I'd like to see his durned old motor when he makes her mote."

And so would I.

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PASTIMES ON THE RIO GRANDE.

SOME wise philosopher has said that you can judge of a people by their amusements. This is true, taking them individually but it would be very unfair to judge the good people of El Paso by the character of some of the places of amusement in the town. For years I had heard wild and woolly tales of the wickedness of this border city, as a place almost without law or gospel, where criminals flocked from Mexico to commit all manner of depredations and escape across the Rio Grande. I have heard people state that it was not safe to go out alone after nightfall.

Well, how the place got such a reputation I cannot imagine. For a more orderly town I never saw. There are ten or a dozen gambling dens running wide open, of course, but I never heard of any brawls, and beside, a decent man's business is to stay away. There are dance halls, where the rougher element of the male population

trip the light fantastic with gayly decked Mexican senoritas, through the stilly night. But there are worse dens within the very shadow of the National Capitol than any place in El Paso.

Over in Juarez, there are a great many gambling places, which are frequented to some extent by Americans. Then, there are the bull fights, which take place annually in our neigboring town. They are brutal and degrading, and I must say, that I think most Americans are led to attend them by curiosity alone, and few go more than once. If you say bull fight to a Mexican, he retorts prize fight, and so it's quits. The Governor of Chihuahua would not allow Fitzimmons and Maher to fight in Juarez, but the Mexican law permits bull fighting with certain restrictions. But what I started out to say was, that El Paso is neither better nor worse than most other places I have seen, North, South, East, or West.

Since I do not participate in any of the pastimes I have named, I am left to my own resources to while away the hours Good books are the most charming companions, and thus I am brought into intimate relationship with the greatest minds of the past and present. Sometimes, as I sit in the sunshine, the book drops from my hand and, all unconsciously, I slip away into the pleasant land of dreams.

Memory plays us many a truant caper, but kindly nature has so arranged that as our journey lengthens, the rough and uneven places are forgotten, and we remember only the fountains that sparkled by the wayside, and the perfume of the roses that bloomed in the valleys we trod.

Who does not treasure in his memory some lingering hand-clasp, some spoken word, or, perchance, only the light in a pair of smiling eyes? But there was a new birth of the soul, a new awakening to the beauty of the universe and the fullness and richness of life. The sun smiled upon a happy world, to you, and your heart answered to the merry song of the birds among the waving trees; you have tasted the stream that flows from the fountain of all earthly joy, and the memory thereof will linger even unto the end.

I have heard the sweet music of feathered choirs in green palmetto groves, or the love song of the mocking-bird in the stillness of the tropic night. I have heard the soft murmur of summer seas, when all the world was hushed, and the moonlight lay, a path of silver across the quiet waves, and have hearkened to the weird aeolian melody of the wind among the mountain pines. I have heard great orchestras render the music of the masters, now grand and terrible as the voice of a storm-swept sea, now soft and sweet as the sigh of the south wind above a bed of violets. But in all the earth I have heard nothing half so sweet as the silvery laugh of youth when the heart is light with love and joy.

But what am I dreaming? Am I growing old, or are these reveries nature's recompense for a ship-wrecked life? A lonely, wandering bachelor may not dream of youth and love, for see, a tear-drop splashed upon the book before me, and the fire has almost died out. Stir the glowing coals until the flames leap high and banish gloom. The desert wind is sighing a mournful requiem to-night—A requiem for my buried hopes

El Paso, Texas, Dec. 18, 1897.

SPRING IN FLORIDA.

WHAT a big country this is, and what a diversity of soil and climate. While the north is in the midst of winter, the coasts of the far south are just touched by the first breath of spring. The past week has been warm, with gentle rains, and early planting has begun. When the winds come from across the gulf stream, the climate here is delightful. Everything is blooming into new life, and the mocking birds are filling the air with the music of their songs.

It is worth a long journey to spend a few hours in one of the dense hammocks of Florida. The tropical verdure is magnificent beyond compare, and every variety of the songsters abound. Flaming yellow jessamine vines festoon the tall palmettos, and the gray and ghost-like Spanish moss waves in the gentle breezes. Along the shores of the Hillsborough Lagoon, at this place, is one of the most beautiful hammocks to be found in Florida. On the shore is a huge shell-mound, from the top of which is the finest view I ever beheld.

One morning I climbed to the top of a tall cedar, soon after the sun had come up from its bed beyond the mighty Atlantic, and the broad lagoon lay like a sheet of molten silver. North, south, and west stretched the wide forest, unbroken by sound of human habitation. There is something impressive about the solitude of the wide forest that cannot be expressed. I always feel the grandeur and vastness of nature, and the might of the Creator.

Did you ever wander by the shore of the mighty ocean, and listen to its ceaseless roar? It always speaks to me with a voice of majesty and might. Sometimes I

imagine that it tells of bright lands beyond the sunrise, where man first saw the light, when time was young. If all the secrets of this mighty world of waters could be known, how much richer would the human race become? Perchance, it might tell of islands and continents, of people and cities, of which modern humanity has no record. The story of the lost Atlantis would be known. The mysteries of all the ships that ever sailed and never returned to port, of treasures sunk beneath the waves, of pirate crews and tropic isles, the haunts of the brave old buccaneers.

All this, and more, the realm of Neptune might disclose, could we read its ceaseless murmurings, as it rolls forever on the sandy shore. But its lessons we may not learn; and so its secrets of life and love, of crime and death will not be known until such time as the sea shall give up its dead, and time shall be no more.

OAK HILL, FLA., Feb. 15, 1897.

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THE SEASON BEAUTIFUL.

EVERY man is, according to the degree of his intellectual development, a lover of the beautiful. No matter how absorbed he may become in the race for worldly gain, there will, at times, steal in upon his senses a just appreciation of the world of beauty around him. All unconsciously, perhaps, but surely, none the less, he will be lifted up, out of his more sordid, baser self, by a contact with the handiwork of Divinity, exemplified in the beauty and joys of nature.

While the warmth and brightness of the springtime awakens new energies, it also awakens loftier aims and

ambitions. The bursting buds and growing plants, springing from the soil at every step, are emblems of immortality. And who is not thankful for life and strength when he beholds so much beauty in all the world around. Petty cares and anxieties fall from him as a mantle.

Each season brings its joys, as well as its sorrows, but in the early days of summer, the old world puts off the somber garb of winter, and is clothed in a witching garb of brightness and beauty. Beside each sparkling stream, and in every sheltered vale, the music of nature rings softer and more alluring than Calypso's siren song, or Orpheus' golden lute. Over all, the mellow sunbeams fall, and their effect is none the less upon the heart of man than upon the plants and flowers that grow and blossom by the wayside.

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FLORIDA—ITS ALLIGATORS AND INDUCEMENTS, WITH REFLECTIONS.

WHEN a man has traveled in Florida, he is always asked: Did you see any alligators? Some people up north have an idea that alligators go about down here like a roaring lion, seeking whom they may devour. But, the fact is, they generally keep to the lakes and ponds, so if you keep to dry land they won't hurt you. I saw one this morning about seven feet long. He is kept in a pen like a hog, and does not strike me as an attractive pet.

An old gentleman, who has a garden here, tells the tallest alligator yarn that I have ever heard, or expect to

hear. He says that one morning he discovered where one had fallen in his garden and sank down several inches in the soft earth. His theory is that the "'gator" was caught up by a waterspout from Lake Okechobe, and carried to this point in a gale. He invited people to come and see the place where his visitor alighted, but I have not seen any one who went.

Florida abounds in game of all kinds. In this section you can find all sorts of small game, as well as deer, bear, and an occasional panther. But give me a rod and line, a good boat, and some bait, and you can do the hunting. As I am known to be an invalid, I won't tell the weight of the biggest fish I have caught, but it was bigger than any I ever saw come out of the South Branch, with the exception of the worthless carp. Any day you can catch a nice string of fish of several varieties, any of which are excellent. And you can load a boat with oysters and clams, as well as soft crabs, any time you want them.

People say, what inducement is there for a young man to come to Florida? I answer, the inducement of having a comfortable home and all the necessaries of life without wearing out body and brain in a ceaseless round of toil. You can homestead land, or buy it at a low figure, and in four year's time have a place worth several thousand dollars, besides having made a living off it, and being in the enjoyment of all of nature's bounties. But you say, "I cannot endure a life like that. It is too quiet." That is the fault of the age. The result of our teachings, and of this era of concentrated wealth and plutocratic rule.

As a result of our system, there comes to the average American boy, a dazzling dream of the future. He sees in the dim distance a crown of immortal fame, woven by the hand of fate to fit his cranium. Even the White House looms in the perspective, and he hears the great cry of a mighty people, who are hankering after the beneficent reflection of his genius. Some day a great awakening will come. In the language of the poet, "he will hear somethin' drap."

There are a great many cures for this sort of big head, but the best is the one that comes from a near contact with the rough side of an unfeeling world. After a few years the laurel crown will have materialized in the shape of a battered straw hat, with a hole in the top, while a patch of potatoes and a cross-eyed mule will occupy the place in his mental vision where he formerly beheld the arena of wealth and politics.

Sometimes a young man becomes so thoroughly embued with the idea of his own importance, that he is a menace to his family, the world at large, and the welfare of his race. He sizes up his own intellect by the growth of his feet, taking no account of worldly experience. At this period he runs to high collars, stays out late, and yearns to throw off all parental restraint. The unhappy father of such a son should exercise his authority long and hard, and let the aforesaid authority assume the shape of a medium-sized two-handed club, or a pair of cow-hide boots.

Oftentimes young men are above the farm. Above the old home that sheltered them in infancy. Perchance, ashamed of the father who first guided the tottering

footseps of childhood, and whose heart swelled with love and pride at the thought of that baby boy. But all these things must be swept away at the bidding of ambition. A curse upon the madness of the age and the rottenness of our social and political system that has changed men into machines, bent upon money getting.

In the few short years of my life, I have wandered here and there, about this great country, and been, in my humble way, an observer of men and things. I have dined in the hovels of the poor, and the palaces of the rich and mighty; I have looked upon life in country villages, and in the haunts of wealth and fashion. But when I count those men and women whom I have seen, whose hearts are free from guile, whose friendships are priceless jewels, and whose hand clasps are remembered through all the years, I think not of stately mansions nor crowded cities, but always of the green country and the humbler wa ks of life.

So why will we allow a dream of wealth to lead us from the paths of peace and happiness? I had rather be followed to the grave by a few sincere friends whose lives I had helped to cheer and brighten, than live and die with all the pomp and circumstance of wealth, and go down to the dust, followed by the curses of ten thousand half-starved laborers from whom I had stolen a horde of gold. You can see such men rolling in wealth, everywhere, and followed by cringing sycophants, who are moral lepers upon the social body.

HAWK'S PARK, FLA. Jan. 14, 1897.

TEXAS LIFE IN THE EARLY DAYS

THE history of Texas is a strange, eventful one, and is fraught with deeds of daring, around which cling the glamor of romance. The heroism of the men who died within the walls of the Alamo, or overthrew the army upon the field of Santa Anna upon the field of San Jacinto finds scarcely a parallel. The wild free life of the plains in the early days, and the story of the range and the trail have been told a thousand times. But, unfortunately, much that passes for the literature of that time, portrays the evil rather than the good.

The hardy frontiersman, with his scorn of danger and hardships, possessed only of such faults as sprang from his environments, in the hands of the imaginative writer becomes the semi-civilized hero of border romance. His tenderness and humanity are lost in the lurid chaos that surrounds the painted figure. Even the hero, who stood like a tiger at bay, the last to die when the Alamo fell, is remembered rather for the stories that he told than because he was the leading spirit in the founding of a mighty commonwealth. Crockett was a typical Texan of those times.

"A brave and manly man was he,
With a kind and tender heart,
A cyclone couldn't phase him,
But a child could rend apart,
Just like the mountain pine that dares
The storms that sweep along,
But rocks the winds of summer time,
And sings a soothing song"

But the old times, the old ways, and the picturesque frontiersman have disappeared wherever the shriek of the

locomotive is heard. Where Pat McCarty and his compatriots have appeared with pick and shovel, the vast ranges have been transformed, and towns and villages have arisen like magic; civil law has taken the place of border justice, and trials are no longer held under the stars, on the open plain, as in the days when they—

"—— knew no law but honesty,
No evidence but facts;
When between the verdict and the rope
There were no other acts."

Out here, among the arid wastes of the vast region that is known as West Texas, civilization was slower to make itself felt, and some characters are still to be found who remind us of the old time.

In the village of Langtry, east of here, resides a county judge, whose fame is wide, and whose decisions are, in some cases, original, to say the least. His name is Ray Bean, and they do say, that he has plenty of friends who will see to it, that he remains Judge Bean until the end of the chapter. By profession he is a vendor of spirituous liquors, and his court room is reached by passing through the saloon.

Upon one occasion, a dapper little dude, from somewhere back east, entered the saloon while the judge was trying a case in the back room, and legal proceedings were temporarily suspended until the judge could attend to the wants of his customer. The guileless easterner asked for a five-cent cigar, and tendered a twenty dollar bill in payment. Judge Bean dropped the bill in his money drawer, and cooly returned to his court room. The stranger waited for him to reappear in vain, and, finally, entering the presence of the august court, de-

manded his change. Refusing to keep quiet, the judge held forth as follows :

"I fine you nineteen dollars and ninety five cents for contempt of court, young man, and further advise you to take your carcass out of town at the earliest date possible or you may get into more trouble."

The guileless stranger from the east, it is written, took his departure.

Judge Bean frequently takes the wind out of knowing lawyers who come into his court armed with the Code of Texas. He will listen patiently to a learned discourse, and then reply :

"This court is govened entirely and bases all its decisions upon the law west of the Pecos, and has nothing whatever to do with the statutes of Texas."

What "the law west of the Pecos" may be, or who enacted it, this deponent sayeth not.

Once upon a time, as the story goes, some fool, who had grown tired of living, jumped off the Pecos bridge, the highest structure of the kind in the world, and, of course, met death on the rocks below. The immortal judge, whom I have named, acted as coroner and summoned a jury to inquire into the case. On the body was found forty dollars in currency and a six-shooter. The judge, acting in his dual capacity, rendered the following verdict :

"We find nothing in the law west of the Pecos, whereby a man becomes punishable for suicide, but the evidence shows that this man did unlawfully carry a six-shooter, for which offense I fine him forty dollars, and order him buried at the expense of the county."

El Paso, Texas, Dec. 2, 1897.

AUTUMN.

THOUSANDS of poets and writers, of every description, annually pay their tribute to the season of spring. But how many poems do we ever see dedicated to the golden, gorgeous autumn? There is surely more in this season to call forth thought, to appeal to the heart and mind, than in any other season of the year. The gentle springtime, with its bursting buds, and songs of birds, lets loose the fountains of our nature which the icy hand of winter has sealed up, and stirs us with a new life, with new hope, and new aspirations. It is a signal to labor, and all the beauty and poetry of the bright sunlight and waving grass is forgotten amid the toils and turmoils of our busy lives. But to us, who dwell among these glorious, wood-crowned hills, who never hear the strife and din of the busy world without, and whose eyes rest, through all the changing seasons, upon the mountains which have stood through endless ages, the same in their solitary beauty and grandeur, the coming of autumn tide is a reminder of rest. There is a sorrowful beauty in the fading woods, and even in the peculiar autumn sunlight, which fascinates the child of nature. The "dying of the year" is a symbol of the end of our lives, when we shall stand upon the brink of the dark river, and look with longing eyes toward that season of rest on the farther shore.

A PERSONAL STATEMENT.

Published in his column in the "Hampshire Review" the week of his departure for El Paso.

I HOPE the readers of this column will pardon what may seem an entirely personal allusion. It is prompted by the many kindnesses I have received at the hands of the people of my native county. My grateful remembrance is beyond the power of mere words to express. We never understand nor appreciate true friendship until we are tried by sickness or adversity.

I expect to leave in a few days for the southwest, in the hope that an arid climate may prove beneficial. If I can fare as well there as in Florida, I shall not complain, and the climate is more heathful. I shall endeavor to write a series of letters during the coming winter, which I hope will prove of some interest to the readers of the "Review", not because I fancy I am able to write interesting letters, but because they will come from an historic land.

It seems to me that none might wish for a better fate than to live and die, here among these green-clad hills, with purest of fountains bubbling at their feet, and the blue sky bending above them. Here, where live, and love, and labor, the manliest race of men in all God's universe. Dear reader, pray that you may never be a homeless and healthless wanderer. I know what it is to live for weeks and months, where the voices of the wilderness were the only sounds to greet my ear, but that is paradise, compared to the loneliness of a crowd. To see all around you, eager, earnest faces, pressing onward in

the race of life, and you an idle looker on. That is a bitter loneliness which the hermit does not feel. Lastly, I would say, stay by the homeland and the home people. Make for yourself some interest in this busy world, and you will do well.

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